

# City of Battle Creek Planning Department ANNUAL REPORT

# 2014

An annual report of the activities and business of the City of Battle Creek Planning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and the Historic District Commission, including departmental responsibilities relative to planning and zoning.



Prepared By:  
Department of Planning  
City of Battle Creek  
10 N. Division Street, Ste. 117  
Battle Creek, MI 49014

**To:** Rebecca Fleury, City Manager  
Susan Bedsole, Assistant City Manager/Community Services Director  
Jill Steele, City Attorney  
Members of the City Commission  
Members of the City Planning Commission  
Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals  
Members of the Historic District Commission

## **2014 Annual Report of the Planning Department**

The Michigan Planning Enabling Act, PA 33 of 2008, as amended, requires that an annual report of Planning Commission activities be prepared for the legislative body that reflects the administration and enforcement of the master plan and zoning ordinance, including recommendations for amendments or supplements to the ordinance.

The Planning Department administers the activities and business for three boards/commissions, all of which are related to goals and objectives in the Master Plan. As such, this report was prepared to highlight the activities of all three boards/commissions, as well as departmental responsibilities and activities relative to planning and zoning. The report includes the following information as follows:

<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Boards/Commissions.....</b>	<b>1</b>
❖ <b>Planning Commission.....</b>	<b>1</b>
❖ <b>Zoning Board of Appeals.....</b>	<b>8</b>
❖ <b>Historic District Commission.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Other Department Activities .....</b>	<b>18</b>
❖ <b>Current and Ongoing Planning Initiatives .....</b>	<b>18</b>
❖ <b>Ordinance Implementation/Enforcement .....</b>	<b>19</b>
○ <b>Site Plan Review.....</b>	<b>19</b>
○ <b>Zoning Enforcement.....</b>	<b>20</b>
○ <b>Miscellaneous.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Summary.....</b>	<b>23</b>

The statute does not require approval of this report but simply that it is filed with the City Commission.

With this report, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the citizen volunteers who are an integral part of the City Government and dedicate their time without compensation to make Battle Creek's government reflective of the attitudes and beliefs of all of its residents.

---

Christine M. Zuzga, AICP  
Manager, City Planning Department

## **INTRODUCTION**

Long range planning for the physical development of the City of Battle Creek is the primary focus of the Planning Department. In addition to preparing and maintaining the Master Plan the department is responsible for the administration of the zoning ordinance and other tools that are implemented to attain the goals and objectives listed in the plan. The day to day operations of the planning and zoning functions for the City include addressing a considerable amount of phone calls, emails, and visits from the public, as well as administrative duties including public hearing notices, meeting minutes, and scheduling of meetings and inspections. For those seeking property specific approvals, staff spends a substantial amount of time with potential applicants to ensure they have a clear understanding of their options as well as the process involved for each one.

The Planning Department is staffed by a Manager, Senior Planner, Zoning/Lead Inspector, and an Administrative Assistant. The Administrative Assistant position has 50% of their time dedicated towards housing rehabilitation activities performed by the Community Development Department.

The information for 2014 outlined herein is summarized in order of the appropriate board/commission and five-year historical data is included for each type of request. Additional activities and responsibilities of the department are included at the end of the report.

## **BOARDS/COMMISSIONS**

### **❖ Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission is a nine member volunteer board appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Commission. They are responsible for planning the future growth of the community and review of specific development projects including special use permits, zoning ordinance amendments, and property rezoning requests. The Planning Commission is also charged with the preparation and adoption of plans for the City including the Master Plan. The Planning Commission meets at 4:00 P.M. on the fourth Wednesday of each month in the City Commission Chamber.

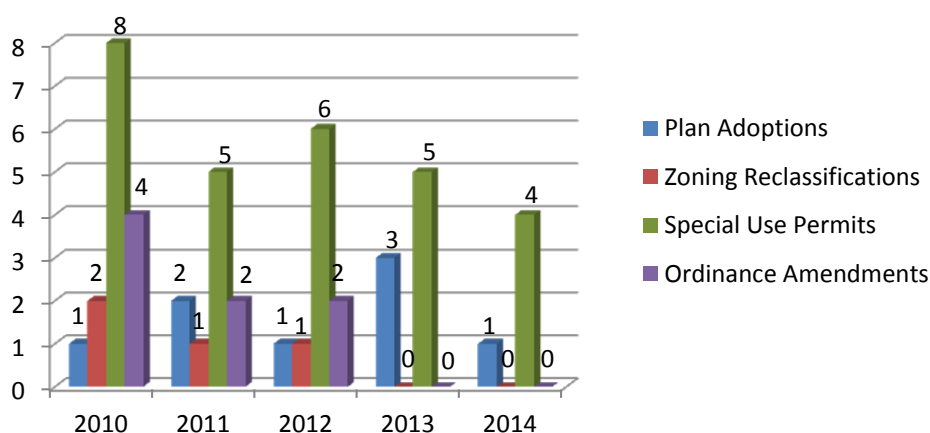
There are two City Commission members appointed to the Planning Commission each with voting rights. The Manager of the Planning Department serves as the Executive Secretary for the Planning Commission and has no voting rights. One member of the Planning Commission also serves on the Zoning Board of Appeals. Members of the Planning Commission for 2014 through the November 5<sup>th</sup> City Commission organizational meeting include:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Steve Barker	1 – 01 – 2017
Alyssa Jones	1 – 01 – 2017
John Godfrey	1 – 01 – 2017
Scott Parker	1 – 01 – 2018
William Burton	1 – 01 – 2018
John Stetler	1 – 01 – 2019
Dan Buscher	1 – 01 – 2019
Dean Newsome, Commissioner	11 – 20 – 2014
Commissioner Susan Baldwin, Ex-Officio	

The Planning Commission serves in an advisory capacity to the City Commission by holding a public hearing on each request, deliberating on each around a set of standards, and providing a recommendation to the City Commission. The enabling legislation and local ordinance requires a public hearing be held for each type of request and furthermore that the public hearing notice be published in the paper as well as notices mailed to property owners and occupants within three hundred feet of the subject property. Additionally, the local ordinance requires a notice to be published that indicates the day/time of the City Commission review and approval. The fee for a non-City initiated request, including special use permit, zoning amendment, or a property rezoning, is \$600 which attempts to cover costs for the required public hearing notifications.

The following chart summarizes the number and type of petitions received in 2014, and compares them with data from the past five years. The spreadsheet on pages 5-7 details the activities of the Planning Commission in 2014.

### City Planning Commission Activity by Year



	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Plan Adoptions	1	2	1	3	1
Zoning Reclassifications	2	1	1	0	0
Special Use Permits	8	5	6	5	4
Ordinance Amendments	4	2	2	0	0

The last five years have shown a decrease in the amount of requests coming through Planning Commission; however the number of projects and dollar value of investment occurring within the City has been increased, demonstrating that projects are primarily occurring within the confines of local zoning regulations. This coincides with the department's and the City's efforts to be more business-friendly and help property and business owners, developers, realtors, and any other individuals seeking to make changes to a property get through process and procedure in an expeditious and efficient manner.

To this end, planning staff is continuously reviewing and researching regulations (existing and potential) to ensure that property improvements, whether a proposed shed on residential property or a new industrial facility, can be reviewed and approved promptly, while being conscientious of surrounding property owners and land uses to ensure their well-being and property values are protected. These efforts are a balancing act to ensure all concerns are treated equitably and the outcome is for the overall benefit of the community.

Following is a summary of the various requests submitted to the Planning Commission in 2014; a detailed list of these can be found on pages 5-7 of this document.

### **Special Use Permits**

Each zoning district in the zoning ordinance outlines the land uses that are permitted by right in each district. These land uses do not need additional zoning approval; one example would be a residential structure in a residential zoning district. The zoning ordinance also lists special land uses that would be allowed in any district; these special land uses are those uses of land that are not necessarily incompatible with the uses permitted in each zoning district, but require review to ensure they would be compatible with surround land uses and additional oversight as to how they are implemented.

The specific special uses provided for by ordinance are subject to public hearing at the Planning Commission. Based on the local ordinance, the City Commission is authorized to make final determinations as to the approval, approval with conditions, or denial of special use permits. Each request is reviewed to ensure compliance with the eight standards outlined in the ordinance.

In 2014, there were three requests for special use permits for a wide variety of uses including an amendment to Reflections Memory Care special use permit to allow ten additional units, a Planned Unit Residential Development to allow 28 multi-family dwelling units as an extension for Keystone Lake, and a group day care home at 387 Waubascon. The Salvation Army also requested an extension of their existing special use permit issued in 2013 for religious services at 400 Capital Avenue, N.E.

### **Rezoning Requests**

Rezoning requests are typically submitted by a property owner, though the City could initiate such a request. A rezoning request needs to be evaluated by looking at the highest and most intensive use of land that could be allowed under the proposed zoning district, zoning districts and land uses of the surrounding properties, and compliance with the master plan and future land use map. A traditional rezoning approval cannot be made with conditions - the zoning district simply changes, and if the request is approved any land uses allowed in the new zoning classification would be allowed on the property.

In 2006, legislation was approved that would allow conditional rezoning in Michigan communities. Conditional rezoning would allow for conditions on a rezoning request but with strict limitations and tied to a specific development and operations plan submitted as part of the application. Staff has had conversations with various property owners about this option, though none have yet to submit an application.

There were no rezoning requests submitted/reviewed in 2014; rezoning requests have been typically minimal in part because of the existing pattern of development that exists in the city, and the various other options that exist to a property owner, including special land use permits and use variances.

### **Ordinance Amendments**

Proposed ordinance amendments can be initiated by the public, staff, or by the City Commission. Generally the discussion is placed on the meeting agenda for initial review to determine the level of interest from the Planning Commission and what type of parameters should be included in a draft ordinance. Providing there is support from the Planning Commission, a draft ordinance will later be submitted and a public hearing held.

In 2014 there were no zoning ordinance amendments considered by the Planning Commission. There were, however, other ordinances that had ties to zoning and/or land use that were approved by City Commission. These are discussed in the last section of this report.

Staff maintains a list of ordinances that should be amended in the future. The bulk of these amendments are for clarification and consistency purposes. Based on the future Master Plan update, staff expects a significant number of amendments to the zoning ordinances will be required.

### **Capital Improvement Program**

Planning enabling legislation requires the preparation and use of a Capital Improvement Plan that attempts to determine and prioritize the anticipated needs of the City for a six year minimum time period. The approval of this document does not place any particular project into the budget but only serves as a guideline to determine future budgeting needs. Each year, the intent is to revise the plan to accommodate current or projected future needs.

Planning enabling legislation requires the Capital Improvement Plan to be reviewed by the Planning Commission to ensure projects are consistent with the goals and objectives of the master plan. The Planning Commission reviewed the 2014-2019 Capital Improvement Plan in January and February 2014, and finding that the projects were consistent with the City of Battle Creek Master Plan, recommended to City Commission its approval, noting that the items contained in the plan were not actually placed in the budget.

## Planning Commission - Summary Year 2014

Date	Petition Type	Request	Petitioner	PC Action	CC Action
<b>January</b>					
<b>Present:</b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
<b>February</b>					
<b>Present:</b>	<b>#S-01-14 Special Use Permit</b>	Requesting a Special Use Permit to amend previous plans approved to allow additional 10 units for Reflections Memory Care.	Reflections Memory Care, Scott Ganton, 14316 S. Helmer Rd., Battle Creek, MI 49015	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
Susan Baldwin	<b>14316 Helmer Rd., Parcel #</b>				<b>City Commission Mtg.</b>
Steve Barker	<b>0072-00-610-0</b>				<b>03/18/2014 Resol.#114</b>
Dan Buscher					
John Godfrey					
Alyssa Jones					
Chip Spranger	<b>CIP 2015-2020 Presentation:</b>	Linda Morrison, Finance Dir. Capital Improvement FY 2015 - 2020	City of Battle Creek Finance Department	<b>POSTPONED</b> (Not Noticed in paper as it was added late)	
<u>John Stetler</u>					
Christine Hilton					
Marcel Stoetzel					
Glenn Perian	<b>Election of Officers:</b>	Chairperson - Dan Buscher Vice-Chairperson - Steve Barker Secretary - John Stetler		<b>APPROVED</b>	
Leona Parrish					
<b>March</b>					
<b>Present:</b>	<b>CIP Year 2015-2020 Presentation:</b>	Linda Morrison, Finance Dir. Capital Improvement FY 2015 - 2020	City of Battle Creek Finance Department	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>Presented to</b>
Steve Barker					<b>City Commission</b>
Dan Buscher					<b>on 4/15/14</b>
John Godfrey					
Preston Hicks	<b>#S-02-14 Special Use Permit</b>	Requesting Extension to SUP Use Permit to allow Church Use at 400 Capital Ave. NE.	Salvation Army Major Timothy Pascoe 400 Capital Ave., N.E. Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>PC -APPROVED</b> <b>6 - MO. EXTENSION</b>	
Alyssa Jones	<b>400 Capital Ave NE, Parcel #</b>				
Chip Spranger	<b>0430-00-001-0 - (EXTENSION</b>				
<u>John Stetler</u>	<b>OF PREV. APPROVED SUP)</b>				
Christine Hilton					
Marcel Stoetzel	<b>#S-03-14 Special Use Permit</b>	Special Use Permit application requesting (2) parcels for a PURD Keystone Lake Phase III. (28 Luxury Rental Homes)	Thomas Carroll, President Carroll Devel. & Prop Mgmt. 1125 E. Michigan Ave, Ste 2 Battle Creek, MI 49014	<b>APPROVED</b> <b>(FINAL PURD PLAN)</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
Glenn Perian	<b>Gethings Rd. Parcel #0622-30-</b>				<b>City Commission Mtg.</b>
Leona Parrish	<b>102-0 &amp; Gethings Circle Parcel</b>				<b>04/15/2014 Resol.#129</b>
	<b>#0072-00-505-0.</b>				
	<b>(FINAL PURD PLAN)</b>				
<b>Preston Hicks Submitted Resignation from Planning Commission</b>					

## Planning Commission - Summary Year 2014

Date	Petition Type	Request	Petitioner	PC Action	CC Action
<b>April</b>					
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
<b>May</b>					
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	<b><u>Agenda Items:</u></b>				
Susan Baldwin	<b>2013 Annual Report</b>	Provided a copy to Commissioners			
Steve Barker					
Dan Buscher	<b>Departmental Projects</b>	Discussion			
John Godfrey					
Dean Newsome	<b>Master Plan Process / Update</b>	Discussion			
Scott Parker					
Chip Spranger					
John Stetler					
Christine Hilton					
Glenn Perian					
Leona Parrish					
<b>June</b>					
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
<b>July</b>					
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
Susan Baldwin					
Steve Barker	<b><u>Workshop Scheduled - Rm 302A</u></b>				
Alyssa Jones	<b>Review of 7 Other Municipalities Master Plans</b>				
John Godfrey					
Scott Parker					
John Stetler					
Christine Hilton					
Glenn Perian					
Leona Parrish					
<b>August</b>					
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
<b>September</b>					
<b><u>Present:</u></b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			

Sept. 24, 2014 - Training Session held for Planning Commissioners & Zoning Board Members (Coldwater City Hall)

## Planning Commission - Summary Year 2014

Date	Petition Type	Request	Petitioner	PC Action	CC Action
<b>October</b>					
<b>Present:</b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
Susan Baldwin					
Steve Barker	<b>Workshop Held:</b>				
William Burton	<b>1. Review of Training &amp; Master Plan Discussion</b>				
Dan Buscher					
Alysa Jones					
John Godfrey					
Dean Newsome					
Scott Parker					
<u>John Stetler</u>					
<i>Christine Hilton</i>					
<i>Glenn Perian</i>					
<i>Leona Parrish</i>					
<b>November</b>					
<b>Present:</b>	<b>Monthly Mtg. Cancelled</b>	(No petitions to be reviewed)			
<b>December</b>					
<b>Present:</b>	<b>#S-04-14 Special Use Permit</b>	Special Use Permit application	Ms. Taylor Seage Hudson	<b>APPROVED</b>	<b>APPROVED</b>
Steve Barker	<b>387 Waubascon Rd.</b>	to allow a Childcare Facility	387 Waubascon Rd.		<b>City Commission Mtg.</b>
William Burton	<b>Parcel #0126-00-009-0</b>	for 7-12 children in her home.	Battle Creek, MI 49037		<b>01/06/2015 Resol.#58</b>
Dan Buscher					
John Godfrey	<b>Year 2015 - PC Mtg. Dates</b>			<b>APPROVED</b>	
Alyssa Jones					
Dean Newsome					
John Stetler					
<u>Lyn Ward-Gray</u>					
<i>Christine Hilton</i>					
<i>Marcel Stoetzel</i>					
<i>Glenn Perian</i>					
<i>Leona Parrish</i>					

## ❖ Zoning Board of Appeals

The Zoning Board of Appeals consists of seven members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Commission, for three-year, staggered terms. They review and consider all petitions for appeals or variances to the requirements of the zoning ordinance. These include dimensional variances, such as requests for signage in excess of that which is permitted, reductions in parking or setback requirements, and buildings in excess of the size permitted by the ordinance; and occasionally requests for use variances, when one is asking for approval to use the property for something not otherwise permitted by right. The Zoning Board meets at 4:00 P.M. on the second Tuesday of each month in the City Commission Chambers.

A dimensional variance can be approved by a simple majority of the members of the Zoning Board of Appeals, but a use variance requires a two-thirds approval vote from its members. Based on State statute, enabling municipalities to adopt zoning ordinance and subsequent case law, persons applying for variances must be able to prove to the Zoning Board of Appeals that a “*practical difficulty*” exists if they are compelled to follow the ordinance as it relates to dimensional variances, and that an “*unnecessary hardship*” exists in order to qualify for a use variance. The Zoning Board of Appeals is also authorized to review appeals from an aggrieved party regarding a decision of the Zoning Administrator’s to determine if an interpretation or ruling was sufficient. Under state law, an individual’s appeal of a decision of the Zoning Board of Appeals must be filed in Circuit Court.

As with petitions that are submitted to the Planning Commission, enabling legislation requires a public hearing with a notice published in the paper as well as notices mailed to property owners and occupants within three hundred feet of the subject property. The fee for a variance request is \$100 for a residential property and \$200 for a commercial property which attempts to cover costs for the required public hearing notifications.

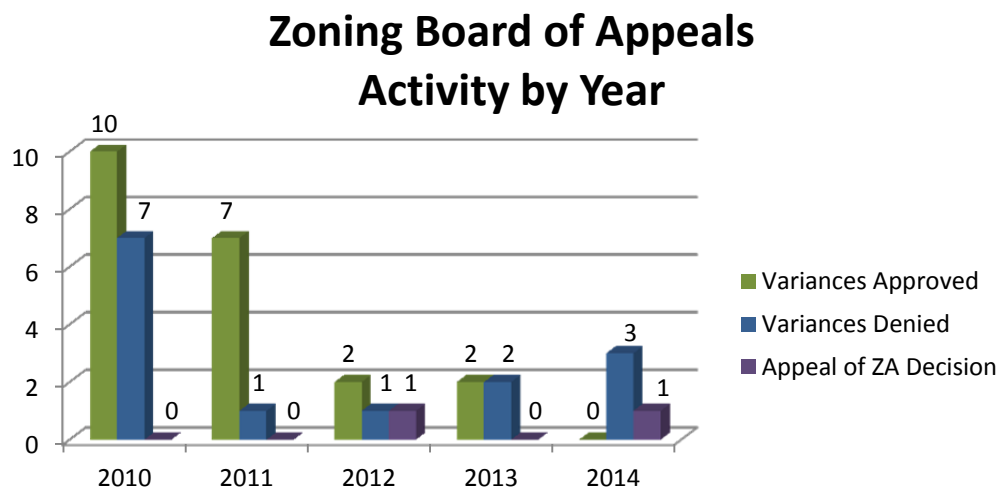
The Michigan Zoning Enabling Act of 2006, as amended, allows for one of the regular members of the Zoning Board of Appeals to also be a member of the Planning Commission. State zoning legislation also provides for the opportunity to appoint two additional “alternate” members. An alternate member may be called to serve as a member of the Zoning Board of Appeals in the absence of a regular member, or in the event that a regular member abstains for reasons of conflict of interest. We have exercised this option and at this time have one appointed alternate.

Members of the Zoning Board of Appeals for 2014 included:

<b><u>Name</u></b>	<b><u>Term Expires</u></b>
Becky Squires	1 – 01 – 2015
John Stetler	1 – 01 – 2015 ( <i>Planning Commission Representative</i> )
Deland Davis	1 – 10 – 2016
Rick Barnes	1 – 01 – 2016
Gregory Dunn	1 – 01 – 2017
James Moreno	1 – 01 – 2017
Samuel Gray	1 – 01 – 2017
Carlyle Sims (alternate)	

The following charts summarize the number and type of petitions received in 2014 and compares them with information from the past five years. There has been a decline in variance applications submitted to the Zoning Board of Appeals most likely due to the amount of staff support provided to applicants prior to the actual submittal.

The spreadsheet on pages 10-11 documents the activities of the Zoning Board of Appeals in 2014.



	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>
Variances Approved	10	7	2	2	0
Variances Denied	7	1	1	2	3
Appeal of ZA Decision	0	0	1	0	1

## Zoning Board of Appeals - Summary Year 2014

MONTH	APPEAL #	LOCATION	APPELLANT	REQUEST	ACTION
<b>JANUARY</b>					
Present:	CANCELED	(No Petitions Received)			
<b>FEBRUARY</b>					
Present:	CANCELED	(No Petitions Received)			
<b>MARCH</b>					
Present:	CANCELED	(No Petitions Received)			
<b>APRIL</b>					
Present:	CANCELED	(No Petitions Received)			
<b>MAY</b>					
Present:	CANCELED	(No Petitions Received)			
<b>JUNE</b>					
Present:	CANCELED	(No Petitions Received)			
<b>JULY</b>					
Present:	Z - 01 - 14	244 Calhoun Street	Mr. Karl J. Bell	Dimensional variance to allow an	DENIED
Rick Barnes		Parcel #1640-00-041-0	244 Calhoun Street	accessory building to be built 4.5 ft.	
Deland Davis		& #1640-00-042-0	Battle Creek, MI 49017	higher than the 14 ft. mid-peak max.	
Greg Dunn					
Sharon Heisler	Election of New Officers:		John Stetler - Chairperson & Greg Dunn - Vice-Chairperson		APPROVED
James Moreno					
Carlyle Sims	Discussion - By-Laws Article VIII, Section 7:				
John Stetler					
Glenn Perian	(Hand-out) Annual Planning Report 2013 Year				
Brad Sysol					
Leona Parrish					
<b>AUGUST</b>					
Present:	Z - 02 - 14	5 Terrace Avenue	Mr. Gregory Lightfoot	Dimensional variance to allow an	DENIED
Deland Davis		Parcel #3720-00-014-0	5 Terrace Avenue	utility building to be built 1.5 ft. from	
Greg Dunn			Battle Creek, MI 49015	side property line; closer than 10 ft.	
James Moreno				from another bldg. and to build in a	
Carlyle Sims				secondary front-yard on a corner lot.	
Becky Squires					
John Stetler					
Christine Zuzga					
Marcel Stoetzel					

MONTH	APPEAL #	LOCATION	APPELLANT	REQUEST	ACTION
Glenn Perian Leona Parrish					
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>					
<b>Present:</b> <b>CANCELED</b> (No Petitions Received)					
<b>OCTOBER</b>					
<b>Present:</b> Approval - By-Laws Article VIII, Section 7 Revision <b>APPROVED</b>					
Greg Dunn Samuel Gray Request to Approve Zoning Board - 2015 Yearly Meeting Dates. <b>APPROVED</b> James Moreno Carlyle Siims <u>John Stetler</u> Glenn Perian Leona Parrish					
<b>NOVEMBER</b>					
<b>Present:</b>					
Rick Barnes <b>A - 01 - 14</b> <b>42 Fremont Street</b> Mr. Nelson Karre, Vandervoort, Request to Appeal the decision of <b>APPROVED</b> Samuel Gray Parcel #5350-00-037-0 Christ & Fisher on behalf of the Zoning Administrator in order to James Moreno owners David Massimino & allow a Boarding House use in an <b>Request to reverse decision of</b> Carlyle Sims Michael Gillfillan. R-2 Two Family Residential District. <b>Zoning Administrator and to allow</b> <u>John Stetler</u> <b>Discussion - By-Laws Article VIII, Section 7</b> <b>Boarding House.</b> Christine Zuzga Marcel Stoetzel Glenn Perian Leona Parrish					
<b>DECEMBER</b>					
<b>Present:</b>					
Rick Barnes <b>Z - 03 - 14</b> <b>12565 Perry Road</b> Edward & Debbie Finch Dimensional variance to allow an <b>DENIED</b> Deland Davis Parcel #6710-12-308-0 12565 Perry Road accessory building to be built with a Greg Dunn Battle Creek, MI 49015 16.6 ft. mid-peak height where only Samuel Gray a 14 ft. is allowed. James moreno Carlyle Sims <b>Z - 04 - 14</b> <b>4496 Beckley Road</b> Mr. Jeff Stiles Dimensional variance to allow an <b>PULLED PETITION- Not Required</b> Becky Squires Parcel #6700-12-210-1 354 Carpenter Dr. accessory building to be built 660 <b>(Decided on Alternative Design)</b> <u>John Stetler</u> Battle Creek, MI 49017 sq. ft. larger than the maximum 1,500 Marcel Stoetzel On behalf of owner Harold Bruns sq. ft. allowed. Glenn Perian Leona Parrish					

## ❖ Historic District Commission

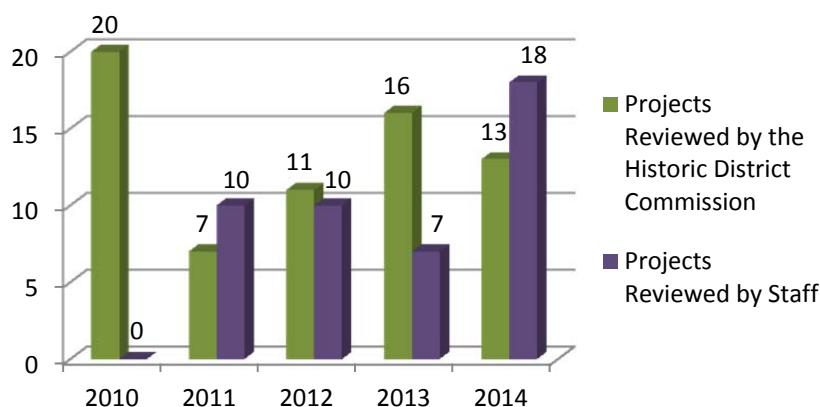
The Historic District Commission consists of seven members appointed by the Mayor and approved by the City Commission for three-year, staggered terms. The primary responsibility of the Historic District Commission is to review applications and plans for the construction, alteration, repair, moving or demolition affecting the exterior appearance of an historic or non-historic resource within any of the five Local Historic Districts. They may also propose to create or modify existing historic districts, and can create a Study Committee to analyze requests for historic designation of specific properties within or outside of historic districts. The Historic District Commission meets at 4:00 P.M. on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month.

State law and local ordinance reflect some specific membership qualifications for the Historic District Commission, including for example that one member, if available, shall be a graduate of an accredited school of architecture, have at least two years of architectural experience, or be an architect registered in the state. One City Commissioner has typically served on the Historic District Commission as a liaison but has no voting rights. Members of the Historic District Commission for 2014 included:

<u>Name:</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>
Kaytee Faris	1-1-2015
Michael Troutman	1-1-2015
Kim Tuck	1-1-2015
Eric Greene	1-1-2015
Dan Buscher	1-1-2016
Jim Hopkins	1-1-2016
Bruce Philips	1-1-2016
Commissioner Susan Baldwin, Ex-Officio	

In late 2010, the HDC passed a resolution authorizing staff approval of minor classes of work in order to expedite approval times for certain types of projects. The following charts summarize the number and type of petitions received in 2014, and compares them with information from the past five years. The spreadsheet on pages 13-17 documents the activities of the Historic District Commission in 2014.

**HDC Activity by Year**



# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## SUMMARY YEAR 2014

Month	Appeal #	Address	Applicant	Action
<b>January</b>				
<b>Present:</b> Eric Greene Dan Buscher Kim Tuck Michael Troutman Marcel Stoetzel Brad Sysol Glenn Perian Leona Parrish	<b>#H-01-14</b>	<b><u>28/32 W. Michigan Ave.</u></b> Replace 1/3 of S. Front Façade new entrance/open windows & also create new entrance on <i>back façade.</i>	Mr. Matt Bastos, 261 E. Kalamazoo, S-L300, Kal., MI 49007 on behalf of Tara Hampton (Buying from Calho County)  <b><u>257 Lakeshore Drive.</u></b> Michigan State Historic Preservaiton Ofc., Mr. Robert Christensen, Natl. Register Coord., State Historic Preservaiton Ofc., 702 W. Kalamazoo St, MI 48909	<b>POSTPONED: Per Applicant (Redesigning Plans will submit at a later date)</b>  <b>Comments Provided in Favor</b>
<b>Election of Officers: Mike Troutman as Chairperson &amp; Dan Buscher as Vice-Chair (Re-Appointed)</b>				
<b>February</b>				
<b>Present:</b> Dan Buscher Eric Greene Mark Jones Doug Sofia Michael Troutman Kim Tuck Marcel Stoetzel Glenn Perian Leona Parrish	<b>#H-02-14</b>	<b><u>78 Ann Avenue</u></b> Notice to Proceed to Demo Fire Damaged Residential House.	Mr. Dennis McKinley, Code Compliance Administrator City of Battle Creek.	<b>APPROVED</b>
	<b>#H-03-14</b>	<b><u>225 W. Michigan Avenue</u></b> Notice to Proceed to Demo fire damaged structure - (On Deck Sports Bar & Grill)	Mr. Dennis McKinley, Code Compliance Administrator City of Battle Creek.	<b>APPROVED</b>
		<b><u>41 Orin Street</u></b> New Vinyl Basement Windows & Metal Siding Trim Corners.	Community Action Agency, Mr. Dan Osborne on behalf of owners Dafore & Dessie Fullerton. 175 Main St., Battle Creek, MI 49014	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
<b>March</b>				
<b>Present:</b>		<b>Monthly Mtg. CANCELED</b>	<b>(No Petitions Received)</b>	
<b>April</b>				
<b>Present:</b> Dan Buscher Kaytee Faris Eric Greene Susan Baldwin, Liasion Jim Hopkins	<b>#H-04-14</b>	<b><u>63 Wood Street</u></b> <b><u>428 Champion Street</u></b> Certificate of Appropriateness to install new fencing.	Historic Adventist Village, Mr. Don W. Scherencel P.O. Box 1414, Battle Creek, MI 49016	<b>APPROVED</b>

# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## SUMMARY YEAR 2014

Month	Appeal #	Address	Applicant	Action
Bruce Phillips <u>Mike Troutman</u> Glenn Perian Marcel Stoetzel Christine Hilton Leona Parrish				
		<b>Welcome Three New Members: Bruce Phillips, Jim Hopkins, Kaytee Faris</b>		
		<b><u>59 Oaklawn Avenue</u></b>	Tichenor Inc., on behalf of owner Steve Latta; 637 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		Roof/Shingles -Like for Like		
<b>May</b>				
<b>Present:</b>		<b>Monthly Mtg. CANCELED</b>	(No Petitions Received)	
		<b><u>67 W. Michigan Avenue</u></b>	Hinman Company	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		Roof Overlayment	70 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49017	
<b>June</b>				
<b>Present:</b>				
Kaytee Faris	<b>#H-05-14</b>	<b><u>200 Capital Ave., N.E.</u></b>	Mr. Gregory Dotson, 200 Capital Ave., N.E., Battle	<b>TABLED</b>
Eric Greene		Notice to Proceed to Demo	Creek, MI, 49017	
Jim Hopkins		Garage structure		
Bruce Phillips				
Michael Troutman				
Kim Tuck				
<u>Susan Baldwin, Liasion</u>				
Glenn Perian				
Leona Parrish				
<b>July</b>				
<b>Present:</b>				
Jim Hopkins	<b>#H-05-14</b>	<b><u>200 Capital Ave., N.E.</u></b>	Mr. Gregory Dotson, 200 Capital Ave., N.E., Battle	<b>TABLED (45 Days)</b>
Erick Greene		Notice to Proceed to Demo	Creek, MI, 49017	
Dan Buscher		Garage structure		
Katee Faris	<b>#H-06-14</b>	<b><u>32 W. Michigan Ave.</u></b>	Matt Bastos, 261 E. Kalamazoo, Suite L-300,	<b>APPROVED</b>
Kim Tuck		Façade Improvements:	Kalamazoo, MI 49007	
Bruce Phillips		Replace windows & storefront		
<u>Mike Troutman</u>		remove asbestos panel on		
Marcel Stoetzel		front, install IPE wood panel		
Glenn Perian		on front (partial). Back Façade		
Leona Parrish		reinstall windows & add door.		

# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## SUMMARY YEAR 2014

Month	Appeal #	Address	Applicant	Action
	#H-07-14	<b><u>243 Capital Avenue, N.E.</u></b> Front Step/Hand-rail/Porch Repair, and build an 12x 16 utility shed.	Mr. Kam Chui, 243 Capital Ave., N.E., B.C., MI 49017	<b>APPROVED</b>
	#H-08-14	<b><u>70 E. Michigan Ave. (1st FL)</u></b> Request new Banner Signage (4 ft. x 6 ft.) for Bail Bond Ofc.	Mr. Richard L. Hansen, A Bail Bond By 1A, 70 E. Michigan Ave. , Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED</b>
<b>(Hand-out) Annual Planning Report 2013 Year</b>				
		<b><u>38 Merwood Drive</u></b> Replacement of Roof with slate like apperance material.	Tom & Kathy VanDaff 38 Merwood Drive Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<b><u>78 Frelinghuysen Avenue</u></b> Replacement of Roof with like apperance material.	Leotis McNutt 78 Frelinghuysen Avenue Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<b><u>32 E. Michigan Avenue</u></b> Add "C" Swoosh to window (Vinyl Graphics to window)	Northern Sign Co. Inc. 101 E. Walton (On Behalf of Owner: Peterson ins. & Financial)	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<b><u>342 Capital Avenue, N.E.</u></b> Install Dumpster Enclosure & attach storage area made with concrete block	Pat Brockwell 342 Capital Avenue, N.E. Battle Creek, MI 49017 (Eagle Scout Service Project)	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
<b>August</b>				
<b>Present:</b> Dan Buscher Kaytee Faris Eric Greene Jim Hopkins Mike Troutman <u>Kim Tuck</u> <i>Marcel Stoetzel</i>	#H-09-14	<b><u>15 Capital Avenue N.E.</u></b> Install 2 Non-illuminated wall signs on the building exterior.	Valley City Sign, 5009 West River Dr., Comstock Park, MI 49321 on behalf of owner: Ed Stanton	<b>APPROVED</b>
	#H-10-14	<b><u>14 W. Michigan Ave.</u></b> Repair & Paint Façade with new Awning & Lighting.	Eric Kitchen (Owner Schlotskys) 14 W. Michigan Avenue Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED</b>

# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

## SUMMARY YEAR 2014

Month	Appeal #	Address	Applicant	Action
<i>Glenn Perian</i> <i>Leona Parrish</i>		<u>9 Woodmer Lane</u> New Roof - Like for Like	X-Team Roofing LLC 8386 7 Mile Rd. Battle Creek, MI 49014	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<u>44 W. Michigan Ave.</u> New Sign on existing awning "Greenstreet Marketing"	Mr. John Pearlman on behalf of owner 44 W. Michigan Ave. Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
<b>September</b>				
<b>Present:</b> <i>Kaytee Faris</i> <i>Eric Greene</i> <i>Jim Hopkins</i> <i>Burce Phillips</i> <i>Susan Baldwin, Liasion</i> <i>Marcel Stoetzel</i> <i>Glenn Perian</i> <i>Leona Parrish</i>	<b>#H-05-14</b>	<b>200 Capital Ave., N.E.</b> Notice to Proceed to Demo Garage structure	Mr. Gregory Dotson, 200 Capital Ave., N.E., Battle Creek, MI, 49017	<b>APPROVED</b>
		<u>19 Woodmer</u> Roof Repair - Like for Like	Tichenor Inc. (On Behalf of Owner) 637 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
<b>October</b>				
<b>Present:</b>	<b><u>Monthly Meeting - Canceled; Held Training Session on Oct. 20, 2014</u></b>			
		<u>23 Hazel Street</u> Siding Repair - Like for Like	Aaron Douglas 7253 Tower Rd., Battle Creek, MI 49014	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<u>47 N. Wood Street</u> Roof/Shingles - Like for Like	Ticheior Inc. 1137 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<u>45 N. Wood Street</u> Roof/Shingles - Like for Like	Ticheior Inc. 1137 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<u>51 N. Wood Street</u> Roof/Shingles - Like for Like	Ticheior Inc. 1137 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
		<u>411 Champion Street</u> Roof/Shingles - Like for Like	Ticheior Inc. 1137 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>

# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION SUMMARY YEAR 2014

Month	Appeal #	Address	Applicant	Action
		<u>227 E. Emmett Street</u> Roof/Shingles - Like for Like	Sherif-Goslin Co. 10 Avenue C, Battle Creek, MI 49015	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
<hr/>				
<b>November</b>				
<b>Present:</b> Dan Buscher Kaytee Faris Eric Greene Jim Hopkins Bruce Phillips <u>Mike Troutman</u> <i>Marcel Stoetzel</i> <i>Glenn Perian</i> <i>Leona Parrish</i>	<b>#H-11-14</b>	<u>14 W. Michigan Avenue</u> New Projection Sign for Schlotzsky's	Schlotzsky's; Mr. Eric Kitchen 14 W. Michigan Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED</b>
	<b>#H-12-14</b>	<u>295 N. Washington Ave.</u> Notice To Proceed to Demo	City of Battle Creek, Mr. Dennis McKinley 10 N. Division St., Battle Creek, MI	<b>APPROVED</b>
	<b>#H-13-14</b>	<u>27 Hazel Street</u> Notice To Proceed to Demo Fire Damaged House	Mr. Robert Hightower 27 Hazel Street, Battle Creek, MI 49037	<b>APPROVED</b>
		<b>Approval of 2015 Meeting Dates for Historic District Commission</b>		<b>APPROVED</b>
		<u>23 Hanover Street</u> Roof/Shingles - Like for Like	Sheriff-Goslin Co. 10 Avenue C, Battle Creek, MI 49015	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>
<hr/>				
<b>December</b>				
<b>Present:</b>		<b>Monthly Mtg. CANCELED</b>	(No Petitions Received)	
		<u>125 Oaklawn Avenue</u> Roof/Shingles, Facia, & Soffit for Garage	Roach Home Improvement 901 Capital Avenue, N.E., Battle Creek, MI 49017	<b>APPROVED: By Planning Staff</b>

## **OTHER DEPARTMENT ACTIVITIES**

### **❖ Current and Ongoing Planning Initiatives**

#### **Placemaking strategy**

Successful placemaking is a dynamic, strategic approach to community development and economic revitalization based on an individual community's strengths within core quality of life areas. The premise is that communities that offer a high quality of life and amenities that are important to talented workers can be very competitive in the global economy. The goal is to help communities reexamine the importance of everyday settings and experiences that shape our lives – downtowns, parks, plazas, main streets, neighborhoods and markets that influence where we live, work and play, and how we interact with each other. In late 2013, the City of Battle Creek was selected as one of five communities in the state to participate in the development of a local Placemaking Strategy through the MIplace Partnership. Two local placemaking workshops were held in early 2014 and a strategy was developed by participants from the City Commission, Planning Commission, City staff, and local agencies. Now completed, the local placemaking strategy can be used for grant applications and has also made the city eligible for PlacePlans, a grant-based technical assistance program that will help communities design and plan transformative placemaking projects identified in the local plan.

#### **PlacePlans Grant Application**

With a completed placemaking strategy in place, the City of Battle Creek became eligible for PlacePlans grant opportunity. This program is a joint effort between multiple State agencies and designed to help communities design and plan for placemaking projects that will capitalize on the assets of a community. In November 2014, the City submitted a Letter of Interest (LOI) to the program for the Capital Avenue, S.W. corridor, from Columbia Avenue to Dickman Road. This area was chosen as it received a high priority in the City Placemaking Strategy as it is a primary corridor into downtown, a connection between the Central Business District and the Columbia Avenue corridor, and adjacent to multiple neighborhoods. This corridor is also preliminarily identified as a WalkUP in the Leinberger study discussed below. The application centered on planning for public spaces and development and improvements in private spaces. The City was notified in late 2014 that they were not selected for the program; the projects selected were specific public space improvement projects that were ready to be implemented. They said however, they were interested in working with the City further and provided connections at the State level to continue conversations on our efforts.

#### **Redevelopment Ready Communities (RRC)**

Another state-wide initiative, RRC is a certification program that promotes communities that are competitive and ready for redevelopment. The process and eventual certification ensures that a community is transparent, predictable, and efficient in their daily development practices, which includes having a streamlined development review process. The first step after approval is an evaluation period where the program team measures the community against a set of standards based on the RRC Best Practices. A report will be provided and, along with technical support, the City will then have time to come into compliance with the recommendations of the report. Certification is awarded once a community demonstrates all best practice components have been met. The program is administered by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, but as with Place Plans, is a collaboration of many community and economic development agencies throughout the state. The City of Battle Creek has been approved into the program. Program leaders gave a presentation at the August

12, 2014 City Commission meeting, and the Planning Department completed the initial self-checklist that was submitted to the MEDC in November 2014. In-depth evaluations by the agency will start early 2015.

### **Target Market Analysis**

In collaboration with the Calhoun County Treasurer, the City of Battle Creek Planning and Community Development departments, the City of Albion and the Albion Economic Development Corporation, the Calhoun County Land Bank Authority received a grant from the Michigan State Housing Development Authority that will study the market potential for new residential development opportunities in downtown Battle Creek and downtown Albion. It will identify potential new housing types and each market's ability to support them, and will help the communities with long-range planning. The Land Bank selected Zimmerman/Volk Associates, a national leader of residential market analysis, to complete the study. The consultants will interview key stakeholders in each community and perform an in-depth analysis of the conditions, existing and projected, of each community. The plan is expected to be completed in early 2015.

### **Walkup Study**

Partnering with the City of Kalamazoo, this is a study of Walkable Urban Places (WalkUP's) by Chris Leinberger of the George Washington University School of Business. Leinberger believes that WalkUP's will drive tomorrow's national real estate industry and the economy. The national trend is that walkable neighborhoods and city centers are seeing increases in market demand, and it is important for communities to identify these areas to focus their efforts. This study will identify our local Walk-UP's; the process started in the fall of 2014 and is expected to be completed in the spring 2015.

## **❖ Ordinance Implementation/Enforcement**

### **Site Plan Review**

The zoning ordinance requires that a sealed site plan be submitted and approved for all development or redevelopment of multi-family, commercial, and industrial structures and/or off-street parking lots (new or expansions). The primary intent of the review is to ensure that the proposed development complies with regulations in the zoning ordinance as well as to insure proper infrastructure is in place to support the project and that appropriate pedestrian, vehicular traffic flow, and stormwater management is provided. Site plans are submitted to the Planning Department and reviewed by this department as well the Inspections Department and Department of Public Works. A site plan is a legally binding document, and therefore, both Inspections and Planning inspect the property throughout construction to ensure compliance with the approved site plan.

In 2012 the site plan review chapter was amended to incorporate groundwater protection regulations and refine the process and requirements. In accordance with this amendment, in 2014 the site plan process and application was better outlined to provide clarity to staff and to applicants, and to ensure better internal tracking throughout the process.

The following chart shows the nineteen projects that have been submitted for site plan review in 2014, many of which exhibit a significant investment in our community.

2014 Site Plan Approvals				
#	Name	Address	Description	Approve/Denied
1	KCC Binda Theatre	450 North Ave	Binda Theater renovation	1/13/2014
2	CVS Pharmacy	865 Capital SW	13,225 s.f. new building	1/31/2014
3	Prairie View Farms	126 Brady Rd	Truck Maint Bldg 7,380 s.f.; 6,400 s.f. of new pavement	2/27/2014
4	MedExpress	25 E Columbia	4717 s.f. new building	3/21/2014
5	TODA America	4750 W Dickman Rd	13,580 s.f. expansion	3/25/2014
6	Endres Processing	170 Angell Street	Expand current facility & shipping	10/22/2014 Rev.
7	Gallagher Ind. Laundry	151 McQuiston Dr.	Parking lot (15 addl. spaces)	5/16/14 Rev.
8	WKW Roof Rails LLC	215 Hill Brady Rd.	Parking lot (243 addl. spaces, Smoking Shack, 900 s.f. Idg dock	7/15/2014
9	Jaqua Realtors	15150-64 S. Helmer	New Business Ofc. Dev – 3 Bldgs.	10/28/2014
10	Denso Manufacturing	1 Denso Rd.	215 sp. parking addt 74,756 s.f.	7/15/2014
11	TRMI, Inc.	100 Hill Brady Rd.	85,800 s.f. warehouse & 274 parking space expansion	9/22/2014
12	Prairie Farms Dairy	126 Brady Road	Truck scale, access drive, 6 silos, generator pad, stormwater utilities	9/11/2014
13	Mancino's	2171 W. Columbia Ave.	Renovate existing restaurant; add 720 s.f. parking spaces	10/1/14 Rev.
14	Reflections Memory	14316 S. Helmer	New 6,000 s.f. addition (10 units)	10/10/2014
15	Denso Manufacturing	1475 Hill Brady Rd.	Concrete eqpmnt pads, 428 s.f. dumpster enclosure, cooling tower	10/10/2014
16	Elite Nails & Hair Salon	513 W. Columbia Ave.	New drive & parking (16 spaces)	12/4/14
17	M & M Equipment/Auto	428 W. Columbia	6,960 s.f. parking addition (16 sp)	11/7/2014
18	Nexthermal	1045 Harts Lake	10,000 s.f. bldg. add, 12,000 s.f. parking add (48 spaces)	1/9/15
19	WKW Roof Rails LLC	215 Hill Brady Rd.	39,900 Sq. Ft. Add, 243 sp parking expansion	12/10/2014

### **Zoning Enforcement**

The Planning Department is responsible for implementation and enforcement of zoning ordinance regulations. Enforcement action is a result of complaints received as well as proactive efforts in the community. In 2014 there were 252 zoning complaints/enforcements recorded, with the majority of violations requiring at least two inspections, one to verify the violation and another to ensure compliance. Following is a summary (and number in parenthesis) of zoning enforcements this department addressed in 2014:

#### **Rental Registration Permit Application Review (64)**

Upon receipt of a rental permit application, this department verifies that the number of units registered at a property is allowed in that zoning district. If not, a legal nonconforming investigation is opened (see below). This number has steadily decreased as rental properties enter into the system and maintain their licensing reducing the need for additional zoning review.

#### **Non-Conforming Investigations (24) and Illegal Use Investigations (60)**

The Planning Department receives a number of inquiries as to the legal use of a property. There are many situations where the current use of a property is not permitted by the current zoning district, and

in these instances, an investigation into the historical use and zoning of the property is needed in order to determine if the current use can be considered legal nonconforming. These investigations are very time intensive and take on average five hours per property as each requires a thorough investigation into all historical records the City maintains on a property, as well as a review of historical zoning maps and ordinances since 1924 when the City first adopted a zoning ordinance. With these documents, staff analyses the historic use of a property in comparison to uses allowed by the historical zoning maps/ordinances to determine if the use has existed lawfully. If so, although not allowed by the current zoning regulations, this use would be allowed to continue as a legal nonconforming use.

In the instance where the current use of a property is not allowed by the zoning, and the use was never lawfully created at the property, the department will proceed with enforcement if necessary to ensure the structure complies with the current zoning regulations.

The greatest number of these requests arises from rental registration permit applications where the applicant is seeking multiple units when the current zoning may only allow one or two units. There are also frequent inquiries from appraisers and realtors inquiring as to the appropriate use of a property. There is currently no fee for this investigation as we want to encourage property owners and other parties to actively seek the legal use of a property.

In 2014, the Planning Department performed twenty-four nonconforming investigations. Of these investigations three properties were found to be in violation of the zoning ordinance and enforcement action implemented to gain compliance.

Additionally, there were sixty complaints regarding the potential illegal use of a property. These are recorded in a different manner than the above investigations because a nonconforming investigation had already been performed, or because it is clear that the alleged use would not be allowed on the property, i.e. car repair at a residential property.

Type of Complaint	Number
Unlawful Car Repair (mostly residential properties)	16
Unlawful animals (chickens, ducks, livestock)	16
Unlawful Residential Occupancy of a Structure	13
Unlawful Used Car Sales	8
Unlawful Business (at residential properties)	4
Misc.	3

#### Miscellaneous Enforcement (104)

Typical violations include, but are not limited to, parking (28), signage (27), improperly placed recreation vehicle (11), and fencing (8).

In addition to the zoning complaints typically received, the City received a large number of visibility/obstruction complaints and therefore staff met with Code Compliance and the Department of Public Works to discuss a visibility/obstruction policy. The outcome of that meeting is that complaints received for obstructions located in the right-of-way will be forwarded to the Streets Department, and the Planning Department is responsible for obstructions located on private property. There were 23 enforcements for visibility/obstruction concerns.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Building permit application review**

Effective November 2009, the Planning Department has reviewed all submitted building, demolition, signage, and fencing permits to ensure compliance with zoning regulations. Each request is reviewed based on the submitted facts included on the permit application as well as how the existing and proposed structures are situated on the property. In 2014, 1,012 permits were reviewed by the Planning Department. Where applications were not compliant with zoning regulations, contact was made with the applicant to assist them with changes necessary for the project to be in compliance and approved.

### **City Business License Application Review (182)**

The Planning Department reviews each license request for liquor licenses (new and renewal), used car sales, and secondhand good/junk facilities for compliance with the zoning ordinance as well as general code compliance. This review ensures the request is compliant with the zoning district in which the property is located, but also a review of existing conditions at the property to ensure there are no open zoning violations of any nature. There were 138 business license applications reviewed by the Planning Department.

The Planning Department also was involved in the implementation and enforcement of the drop box ordinance including an inventory of existing boxes located throughout the city and enforcement of those in violation to achieve compliance. There were 48 inspections made for drop boxes, and enforcement through the court system was necessary for a few.

### **Vending/CBD Ordinance**

The last few years have shown an increasing interest in allowing food truck/vendors in the downtown area, though it was prohibited by two different ordinances – Ch. 814 Central Business District and Ch. 864 Vendors. After a series of community engagement efforts that helped to define parameters, City Commission ultimately approved amended ordinances to allow for vending on Jackson Street with a sunset provision of December 31, 2015. The Planning Department staff was involved in the conversations and amendments to ensure consistency with other regulation.

### **Billboard Survey**

In 2001, the City revised the sign ordinance to cap the number of off-premise outdoor advertising signs (i.e. billboards) to 75. At the time of the revision there were 82 billboards within the City limits, and with the cap, no additional billboards would be allowed until existing signs were removed to get below the cap number of 75.

Because we continue to receive frequent calls about potential new signage, it was important for the Planning Department to accurately document locations and photographs of each billboard. The 2001 sign survey included with the 2001 report does not adequately list locations of the documented signage. In spring of 2014, at our request the GIS Department photographed and geocoded each location so that the City has an accurate survey. As of last summer there were 87 billboards within the City limits; it is not known if the additional signs were installed unlawfully without permits or if they were inadvertently missed on the first survey.

Having the locations and photographs assists the Planning Department in being able to better track changes to the billboard inventory and allow for enforcement action if necessary. It will also assist with evaluating billboard conditions to determine if further amendments to the ordinance would be necessary.

## **SUMMARY**

The amount of requests coming into the department has been relatively consistent with previous years, though there is a decline in the types of projects requiring additional approvals from any of the appropriate boards and commissions. This may be due in part to the assistance provided to applicants from the outset of a project to help it be successful in the most expeditious and efficient manner.

A priority project list is maintained by the Planning Department to ensure ongoing projects meet the goals of the Planning Commission, City Commission and the community as a whole. In the upcoming year, an update to the master plan will be underway which will help ensure the department projects continue to be in alignment with the aspirations of the community.